

Fires in Winter// Reddie by ninaloveshiddles

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Summary:

Eddie and Richie are best friends, but as they have gotten older, the friendship has morphed into something more complicated. The Loser's Club meets for a hangout over Winter break, and the feelings the two have for each other keep burning hotter and wilder. The story of how Richie and Eddie finally get together.

1. Punctual Pair

Author's Note:

This is a work in progress that will eventually contain smut AND fluff.

A few notes about the world: The characters resemble the ones from the movie (2017 and 2019)

Bev did not move away and all members of the Loser's Club are present

Bev and Bill are not a couple

The year is around 1992

Reddie fic

“Hurry up Tozier, we’re gonna be late.”

“Look Eds, the only thing I do quickly is fuck your mom.”

“You’re disgusting.”

“Wham bam thank you ma’am,” Richie teased.

The two seventeen year olds were standing in Richie Tozier’s bedroom which was covered in band shirts and dirty pairs of jeans. Eddie Kaspbrak crossed his arms impatiently. It was the first day of winter break and the Loser’s Club had decided to meet at their old hideout. Once a utopia for childhood summers, it was now an escape for listening to the radio, drinking, and smoking.

“Shut up trashmouth. Now would you please hurry up?” Eddie eyed Richie petulantly. The taller boy, by four inches to be exact, was nose deep in his closet. Richie shuffled through his clothes, making sure to take his sweet time. Richie liked to mess with everybody. It was his thing. But no one was quite as satisfying to annoy as Eddie, who had a pretty short temper and a quick wit.

“I don’t know why you’re hurrying, Bev said to get there at 11.” Richie settled on a sweatshirt, opting for the warmest option.

“Bull shit. She said 10,” Eddie argued. Richie rolled his

eyes; it was impossible to tell Eddie he was wrong. He pulled his Damn Yankees t-shirt over his head and threw it across the room to join a pile of others. The boy shivered and reached for the sweatshirt, the winter chill palpable even indoors. He normally wouldn't undress in front of anyone. He was a little thinner than average with no real muscle definition. He hated the dark hair that spread up from his pubic area onto his stomach. It's as if part of his body was already a man while other parts reeked of puberty. Richie always thought he looked a little odd; with his mop of black hair, his prominent nose, not to mention his giant fishbowl glasses and big lips. He just felt awkward; so did most boys his age he assumed. But Eddie was his best friend; if he thought Richie looked weird, he wouldn't say anything.

Eddie's eyes flitted from the door to Richie's naked torso at least ten times. He felt his chest get warm and red as he struggled to avert his gaze. He always thought Richie's body was attractive. At least to him. Eddie didn't grow much hair, so Richie seemed manly and sexy to him. Growing up he figured he was just jealous of Richie's body...but in the past few months he realized jealousy wasn't quite the emotion he was feeling when he saw his best friend out of his clothes.

"Like what you see?" Richie teased, noticing the shorter boy looking at him.

"What I want to see, asshole, is your butt out the door. Let's go!" Eddie deflected. Richie huffed and pulled the sweatshirt over his head. He spun and linked his arm with Eddie's.

"Fine, fine. Well my good chap shall we partake in a midnight stroll?" he asked in a subpar British impersonation.

They walked down the stairs and pulled on their coats, scarves, and hats. Derry winters were no joke, and at least one person died of hypothermia every year. The hideout was equipped with tons of blankets and a fire pit; but the walk there and back could be frigid. Richie smiled to himself as he watched Eddie wrap himself up in multiple layers. He had on what could only be described as a parka, complete with a thick scarf that could fully wrap around his neck and mouth three times. He looked like that little kid from *A Christmas*

Story.

Cute, cute, cute, Richie thought. This wasn't a new thought either. Ever since Richie was thirteen he possessed a type of infatuation with the shorter boy. When he was younger he thought they were strong feelings built out of friendship. Of course he wanted to spend every moment with Eddie, he was fun and smart. That was normal, right? But as they aged, hormones destroyed his ability to rationalize his feelings; Richie came to the conclusion that he was in love with his best friend. And Eddie had grown into a handsome young man; especially once he started swimming.

Sonia Kaspbrak had read some article about how swimming was the best exercise for kids with asthma; so she allowed Eddie to join the swim team. This resulted Eddie's lean body being carved with muscles. Not a bad view in Richie's opinion...not bad as the subject of some wet dreams either. He was hopelessly in love with this dork; with his thick Brunette hair and deep brown eyes.

"Alright marshmallow man, let's head out," Richie prompted. They walked out into the cold, the air sharp as a knife.

"Mother fucker," Eddie hissed behind his scarf.

"Only yours, Eds," Richie responded, leaping away from Eddie who attempted to slap him.

"Beep beep, Richie," he pouted, the cold bringing down his mood. They walked in relative silence for a bit, their path illuminated by a full and bright moon. It was a bit of a way to walk, but Richie had gotten his car taken away for a month after his mother caught him smoking pot in his dad's work shed. They wouldn't have fit their childhood bikes anymore, so walking was the only way to go. Richie turned onto Neibolt Street, Eddie following him reluctantly.

No one in the Loser's Club enjoyed walking down this street, especially not by *that* house. But it was a great short cut, and Richie's large teeth were already chattering noisily. Richie refused to look at the row of houses, but he made sure to walk between them and Eddie. Something about the house gave him a sense of dread; and not just because of what had happened there years before. It

was more like impending doom type feeling; like of something that had not yet happened. They stayed silent; Eddie wouldn't have been able to speak if he wanted to. He reached out to grab Richie's gloved hand with his mitten, squeezing with an almost painful force. Richie kept his hand in Eddie's; not releasing it until they were another block away from the house.

"Jesus señor, you could crush a peso with that grip," Richie exclaimed in a shitty Spanish accent.

"After all these years, your voices never seem to get any better," Eddie chuckled.

"Sir, I'm wounded" Richie exclaimed, grabbing at his heart. They were close to the hideout now; they just had to cross the kissing bridge and walk a few yards into the woods. Richie felt his face burn hot despite the nipping wind. He had written his and Eddie's initials on the fence in a fit of teenage angst and longing. They had passed the bridge multiple times, but each time he feared Eddie would finally notice and put the pieces together.

Eddie sighed quietly; he remembered the day he first saw the R & E carved into the wood. Sometimes he liked to imagine that they stood for him and Richie. Most likely though, it was for some jackass named Rodney and his girlfriend Eleanor or some shit like that. Still, imagining the former made his heart swell and filled his stomach with comforting warmth.

"No sign of Bev's car or Mike's moped. Told you it was at 11."

"Fuck off shit-for-brains. Mike lives across town and Beverly's late for everything." Eddie straddled over the fence and landed firmly on the other side. The two of them began walking through the crunching leaves to the hideout. "Ben, Bill, and Stan are probably already starting a fire."

"Bet you five bucks we're the only one's there," Richie challenged.

"You gotta deal, Tozier."

2. Warming Up

Summary for the Chapter:

Eddie and Richie arrive before everyone else. They have a little heart to heart followed by some play fighting.

“Damn it,” Eddie huffed as he and Richie dropped down into the hidden club house.

“Pay your dumbass tax Eds,” Richie demanded, holding out a large calloused hand. Eddie sighed and reached into his pants pocket for his wallet, struggling to move aside all of his layers and grab anything with his mitten. Richie smiled as the shorter boy grew more and more frustrated, his cheeks were turning red and expletives were flowing.

“Fuck it, fuck it! You’ll get the money when we get back.”

“Bull shit, you’re just hoping I get high and forget. I’ll start a fire so you can take off your 30 pieces of clothes and get me that sweet, sweet cash.” Eddie rolled his eyes but didn’t protest. A fire sounded amazing. Richie pulled a pack of matches from his back pocket and set to work on the fire pit.

A few years ago they had opened up more of the clubhouse to allow ventilation, all thanks to Ben of course. They kept beer in a box in the corner; during most of the Derry months it acted as a sort of refrigerator. Blankets that they had gotten from Good Will and yard sales covered nearly all of the walls to provide some insulation. Warmer materials like sleeping bags and comforters were spread out across the floor. They were full of holes and stains, and the clubhouse itself was dusty and old; but the Loser’s Club viewed it as their home.

Eddie jumped in place as he watched Richie take some logs from a pile and start building. He bit his lip as he watched the taller boy lean down, his jeans stretching tight over his rear. For someone so thin, he had a pretty round ass; and Eddie once again was having difficulty averting his gaze. Richie arranged the kindling and struck a

match, consuming the pit in large tongues of flames. The fire began to blaze hot and flooded the room with an orange glow.

Richie looked back at Eddie, and his heart thumped against his sternum. Eddie's eyes were peeking out from his scarf, shining against the firelight. A few locks of his hair had fallen from his hat and swooped across his forehead. In Richie's mind, Eddie was handsome but also beautiful. There was a softness about him that was so pretty, it made Richie feel like he was gagging on his own tongue. Richie drew a ragged breath and summoned up his usual persona.

"Alrighty pardner," he began, impersonating John Wayne, "Now I think you oughta give me that bounty ya owe me. Five bucks or I'll fill ya with lead." He pointed finger guns at Eddie.

"Okay, whatever trashmouth."

Eddie removed his gloves and stood over by the fire to warm up. He removed his scarf and the parka, setting them all to the side. Richie rolled his eyes, the kid still had on earmuffs, a shirt, a hoodie, and a coat. Probably even long johns.

"Here, take it," Eddie pouted, pulling a five from his wallet. Richie grinned and snatched it away, stuffing the bill into his underwear.

"Making sure you can't steal it back once I'm high as a kite Eddie boy." He said in response to the shorter teen's expression.

"Okay, that is beyond disgusting. Do you know where that's been? Or how unhygienic that is for the person who gets it next?"

"Don't worry I don't have crabs, your mom and I got checked together."

"Beep beep Richie." Eddie turned his back to the fire, letting the flames warm his other side. Richie stood next to him, opting to face the flames instead. "It's weird to think this is our last winter break," Eddie said out of nowhere.

"They have winter breaks in college," Richie responded.

“You know what I mean, Tozier. All of us, together. Going to the same school. Living in the same town.

“Yeah I guess,” Richie conceded. He knew what Eddie was worried about. Beverly was going to Oregon. Ben had a plethora of schools to choose from. Bill wanted to go to New York. Stan always said he’d go to school somewhere warmer. Mike probably would stay, he had the farm. Richie...hell he had no clue what he was actually going to do once he graduated. He always joked that he’d get his diploma, walk of the stage, and keep on walking till he was out of Maine.

“I just don’t want to get left behind,” Eddie said quietly, his eyes cast to the ground. Eddie was going to Derry community college, most likely because Sonia wanted to keep an eye on him. Richie couldn’t understand how Eddie dealt with her on a daily basis; it had to be suffocating.

“You won’t,” Richie promised. He looked down to see that his hand was a mere inch away from Eddie’s. He wanted to reach out and take it, squeeze it so that Eddie knew he would always be there for him. In a rare moment of seriousness, Richie added, “you know I’d take you with me.” Eddie looked up at him, his brown eyes wide and shadowed in darkness.

“Stop joking,” Eddie huffed. The firelight reflected wildly off of Richie’s glasses. Eddie thought he almost looked angelic.

“I’m not. Never about that.” Richie gripped Eddie’s shoulder and squeezed, doing his best to reassure his friend. They looked at each other for a few moments longer. Eddie was so damn beautiful; Richie would have given anything to kiss the pout from his mouth. But Richie wasn’t smooth and he didn’t feel that brave. So he opted for, “but your mom can’t come. I’m not ready to be your step dad.”

“You’re such a fucking asshole,” Eddie yelled, but a smile was threatening to break on his face. He shoved Richie, sending him flying into the pile of pillows and comforters. Richie hopped to his feet grinning, happy that he broke Eddie out of his slump, for the moment at least.

“Let’s get ready to rumble! Eddie Spaghetti, lightweight champion of

the North East faces off against Trashmouth Tozier in the showdown of the century!!!” Eddie came at him, tackling him to the floor. Richie wrapped his arms around the shorter boy and rolled, ensuring he was the one on top. But Eddie was stronger than he looked, and trying to pin him was easier said than done. Eddie pushed up on Richie’s chest, nearly hoisting him into the air. He wrapped his legs around Richie’s waist and rolled with all of his might so he was back on top straddling the taller boy. He pushed on Richie’s shoulders, attempting to pin him. The two of them were panting heavily, and Richie could smell the mint on Eddie’s breath. The kid always smelled like he had just brushed his teeth. And feeling Eddie’s weight on top of him...it was intoxicating.

To Richie’s horror, he could feel himself growing hard. His cock twitched and strained against the confines of his jeans. Eddie shifted slightly, his ass brushing up against Richie’s erection. The two boys froze, and time seemed to stand still. *Holy fuck, he noticed!* Richie was mortified. Before Eddie could utter a word, a voice from above called down.

“Hey guys, aren’t you a bit early?” called Ben. Eddie climbed off of Richie in a flash, and Richie remained on the floor, wishing he could disappear.

Author's Note:

Thank you so much for reading. I encourage comments :)

This is my first Reddie fic and I'm very excited to write more (I've only been in the fandom for about three weeks).

Feel free to follow me at [millennialmfa](#) on tumblr

3. Liquid Courage and Smoke Serum

Summary for the Chapter:

After a few beers, Eddie confronts Richie, who has been smoking a lot of pot.

“What’s up haystack?” Richie greeted, his voice cracking. *Fucking perfect, add to the humiliation.* Ben hopped down into the club house with surprising ease. He had started eating better around a year ago; even went running. Honestly, his nick name didn’t quite work anymore seeing as Ben Hanscom was only about 15 pounds overweight.

“Well, I was just gonna get the fire started before everyone got here.” Ben finally noticed Richie on the floor. “What’s up with Richie?” he whispered to Eddie.

“Oh um...wrestling. I beat him at wrestling, and he’s pouting,” Eddie responded, his face blushing a deep pink. Hopefully Ben thought it was flushed from the fire.

“Nice, Eddie. I guess all that swimming has paid off.” Eddie smiled shyly. He had taken 5th place at the county swim meet; not too bad for a loser with asthma. “Well I heard Bill’s car as I was walking, and I think Stan carpooled with him.”

“Sounds great, let’s get this party started,” Richie responded, leaving his shame on the floor. A few puffs of pot and hopefully he wouldn’t even remember what happened.

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“Stop hogging it Richie, c’mon,” Beverly protested, snatching the blunt away.

“Ugh fine, you’re lucky I’m generous Bev.” Beverly rolled her eyes at this and took a deep inhale.

“Generous? It’s my stash, trashmouth!” The Loser’s Club was all together with their comforters and sleeping bags around the

fire. Ben and Beverly sat close while Stan was perched between Bill and Mike. Richie and Eddie sat on complete opposite sides of the pit. Eddie was white knuckling a beer, his eyes focused on the flames. *You're overthinking. Stop overthinking you idiot, just relax... god dammit!*

Eddie took a swig of his beer without thinking. He never smoked pot because of his assumed asthma, but he also didn't drink this much. He only needed about one and a half to feel a little buzzed. His mind however was somewhere else, and he had unconsciously drained his fourth beer of the evening. Mike looked over to the thinner man and furrowed his brows.

"You okay, Eddie? That's beer number five," he prompted. Stan looked over, his curly hair flattened by a cap he had received for Hanukah.

"Shit, I've never seen him drink more than two," Stan added, his eyes more suspicious than Mike's.

"Why is everyone so interested in my alcohol?" Eddie asked defensively. Richie looked over but said nothing. He had been actively trying to avoid Eddie since the rest of the Loser's Club had arrived.

"What does it matter? It's winter break, let him enjoy himself," Bill said, one sentence settling the entire question. He grabbed the blunt from Beverly and took a deep inhale. Bill Denbrough was still their fearless leader, and his charisma never seemed to falter. Even more so now that his stutter had all but dissipated, only rising up when he was flustered. Eddie gave a small smile to Bill, who shot back an almost indiscernible nod. The group continued talking about Christmas plans and how terrible finals had been, but Eddie couldn't keep his mind from racing.

He knew what he had felt. Richie had definitely had an erection. And it had definitely rubbed deliciously over Eddie's ass. And Eddie definitely had a semi just from thinking about it. What he didn't know was what it all meant. He had been racking his brain sorting through the possibilities, and then the following courses of action, and finally the possible outcomes. Some rudimentary risk assessment. Maybe he was being stupid for even thinking it could

mean anything. Richie was a teenage boy and there was a lot of friction. It was simple biology.

Eddie rolled his eyes; like he could make anybody hard. He figured he possessed as much sex appeal as a blanket. But still, the thought lingered in his brain; fantasies entered his body through every sip of beer. Richie did treat Eddie differently than the others... and there were times he could have sworn he caught Richie staring at him. Maybe even gazing. They had a bond that was different from the other Losers, and he briefly wondered what the reason for that might be. Reciprocated feelings hadn't been in the realm of possibility...at least not previously. But if for the sake of argument, Richard Tozier got a boner because he, Edward Kaspbrak, had been on top of him...Eddie's heart slammed painfully against his chest just to think of it.

Eddie glanced over at Richie, who seemed to be doing everything in his power to pretend like he didn't exist. The beer was making Eddie's body feel like one big vibration. His friends looked slightly blurry and he had gotten so warm he was now down to just his long sleeve shirt.

"SSsup Mike?" He greeted. Mike was sipping on a beer as he sat down next to Eddie.

"Bill, Stan, and Ben are gonna play poker. I learned from last time that Ben is unbeatable, and Stan makes Bill really competitive."

"Mmm yeah, it's like playing arcade with R-Richie." Eddie knew his words were slurring but he had no idea how to make it stop. He also felt the corners of his mouth creep up into a goofy smile when he said Richie's name.

"Yeah about him," Mike began, tilting his head over to Richie who was now giggling madly with Beverly, "are you guys good?"

"Why would you say that?" Eddie accused a little too quickly. Mike pressed his lips together in a thin line, debating whether he should push anymore than that.

"You two are usually attached at the hip, I guess."

“Oh uh- asthma. My asthma’s been acting up, don’t wanna be around the smoke,” Eddie lied, knowing how lame that sounded as he sat 10 inches away from an open fire pit. Mike nodded, deciding if Eddie didn’t want to talk about it, he wasn’t going to push it.

“How’s swim team?”

“Good. I’m really fast you know?” Eddie responded with unusual confidence. This made Mike laugh, and he took another swig of his beer. “The guys. You know they’re jerks and shit but, hey. They don’t shove me into lockers anymore. I bring up our rankings...m’ too important to damage.”

“I’m real proud of you, Eddie.” Eddie leaned his head on Mike’s shoulder.

“Thanks man.”

Across the fire pit Beverly and Richie were standing now, hushing their voices from the three playing poker. They were attempting to stifle their laughter, and Richie was softly snorting.

“You have to answer! You gotta,” Beverly urged.

“I’m too high for this,” he snorted again. “Pot’s like my truth serum.”

“I know, I know! Now answer.”

“The last time I masturbated was this afternoon.” Beverly’s eyes widened and she cupped her mouth.

“No way,” she giggled. She furrowed her brows, “wait wasn’t Eddie with you all day?”

“Nope, wasn’t part of the question,” Richie dismissed. He may be high, but he could still think quickly, thank God. Richie may or may not have jacked off just minutes before Eddie had arrived. And he may or may not have done it because it turned him on to think about getting caught. And he may or may not have died from embarrassment if Beverly had learned any of that. “Alright, truth or dare?”

“Hmmm, dare.” Beverly grinned, her eyes just as red as her hair.

“Oo, I do declare Miss Marsh,” he began in his southern colonel accent, “you are so very full of surprises.” Beverly play punched him. “Okay. I dare you to...sit in the lap of the cutest guy here.”

“Oh, you’re bad Tozier.” To his surprise she waltzed confidently over to the three boys playing poker, emboldened by a mix of weed and beer. She put a shushing fingers to her lips at Richie, and then gingerly sat down in Ben’s lap. She claimed to be cold and asked how the game was going. *Well I’ll be damned. If only Ben knew.*

Richie bit his lip and nervously glanced over at Eddie. The two boys locked eyes momentarily, but Richie retreated to look at his shoes, causing Eddie to take another chug of beer. Richie sighed to himself and hopped into the hammock a few feet away from the fire pit. He took a long drag off the blunt, his muscles relaxing again. He closed his eyes, his head feeling light and free now.

“Move over,” said a voice near his feet. Richie’s eyes popped open, his breath stopping momentarily. Eddie was standing by the hammock, swaying slightly from the effects of the alcohol.

“Eds, we both barely fit in this when we were kids.”

“Yeah, jackass. That’s why I need you to move over.” Richie’s face felt too hot. He could never truly say no to Eddie, but he didn’t trust himself being in such close proximity after what happened earlier. He hesitantly spread his legs to the sides of the hammock, allowing Eddie a space to crawl in. The shorter boy followed suit, putting his feet on either side of Richie’s torso. “So what were you and Bev talking about?”

“Truth or Dare.”

“I wanna play,” Eddie demanded, a wry smile on his lips. He felt a little dizzy, but his limbs were loose and warm.

“Fineeee. Do you wanna be the asker or the askee?” Richie’s hands found their way to the top of Eddie’s knees; both boys more touchy due to their clouded minds.

"I want to ask," Eddie said quietly. His heart was pounding spastically, every inch of his skin covered in gooseflesh despite the fact that he was burning up. He needed to do this now before he completely lost his nerve. "Truth or dare?"

"Truth."

"Earlier," Eddie began, licking his lips nervously. "When we were wrestling..."

"Mhhmm?" *Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.*

"Did you get a boner from me...specifically?"

"Never mind I pick dare." Richie's head was swimming, and he didn't realize that he was now gripping Eddie's knees.

"I dare you to tell me the truth," Eddie responded, his voice betraying anxiousness. Richie didn't want to deal with this right now, but he also knew being high might make it easier to tell the truth. He wanted to tell the truth. Get it out there. If it went badly he could just say he didn't remember and that he was probably just full of bullshit.

"Yes. It was from you, specifically." Richie's eyes looked enormous and vulnerable, all red and magnified behind his glasses. He bit his lip, waiting for any response from Eddie. The shorter boy's breath hitched and he gave a smile that looked like...relief? He opened his mouth to speak but was interrupted by Stanley.

"Alright, we're all heading out and I'm giving everyone a ride home." It was an order, not a request. Stanley prided himself in being the one that got everyone back safely after a night out.

"You got it Stan the man," Richie answered, unable to take his eyes off of Eddie's smile.

Notes for the Chapter:

Thank you so much if you are reading this fic. I've got lots of ideas, and I think I'm going to try and make it long with many chapters. As always feel free

to comment, and follow me on tumblr at millennialmfa.

Author's Note:

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4. Moonlight

Summary for the Chapter:

We finally take a little slow out of the burn. Richie and Eddie arrive home and are alone again.

Stan drove slowly, not wanting to get pulled over while a bunch of underage drinkers and smokers filled the car. Bill's car to be exact. Well, technically Bill's mom's minivan. The Loser's liked to make fun of Bill for driving around in the mom mobile, but it was comfortable and was able to fit all of them. Bill was sitting up front with Stan, his head leaning out the window like a golden retriever. Ben and Beverly took the middle; Ben had fallen asleep on Beverly's shoulder as she played with his hair. Mike sat between Eddie and Richie in the back row, blissfully unaware of the hormonal panicking on either side of him.

Eddie's mind was reeling...Richie had gotten a boner because of him. He had gotten his best friend hard. He was having a difficult time believing the reality; he honestly was shocked that Richie had admitted it. So what now? Did this mean Richie liked him back in the same way? And what did that lead to? It seemed like each step just led to more uncertainties. On the other side of Mike, Richie's mind was in tatters.

Fuck. A smile? What the fuck does a smile mean? Fucking Stanley, Eddie was about to say something. Damn it I'm too high for this shit. Richie's head was in his hands, his leg bouncing obnoxiously. A smile could mean many things. Was it relief? Pity? Gas? At the moment, he was unable to decipher much of anything, and he was driving himself crazy.

One by one Stan dropped the Losers off, first Ben, then Beverly, followed by Mike. Mike crawled out of the back row, clapping Stanley on the shoulder.

"Thanks for the lift, I know it's out of the way."

"Not my gas," Stan replied, giving a sly smile to Mike.

Stanley cared about his friends too much to let any of them walk home. He would have biked each of them, one at a time, through the snow, if he had to. Mike waved at the car and walked down his drive. As Stan pulled back onto the main road he looked in the mirror at Eddie and Richie.

“Alright Eddie, your house next.”

“Eds is staying with me tonight. Don’t want Sonia to see him like this,” Richie responded, looking over to the shorter boy who was swaying in his seat.

“Ooo, she’d be so pissed,” Eddie commented, a small giggle bubbling up from his throat.

“Good call,” Stan responded. He continued to drive, the headlights barely necessary due to the light of the moon. Eddie watched as the trees dashed past his window, naked and lanky, black against the night sky. He always loved to see trees once the sun was down. They never looked quite real, more like sketches or paintings popping out from a scenic landscape.

Richie watched Eddie, noticing how he stuck his forehead to the glass to look out the window, the way his fingers twitched as he concentrated. Richie felt like he had rocks in his stomach, the anticipation of being alone with Eddie for the rest of the night building up into his throat. What was he going to do? Pretend none of this had happened? How could he? He had admitted that Eddie made him pop a boner...you don’t just ignore something like that, right? But in the back of his mind he reasoned that it couldn’t be all bad. Eddie could have gotten mad. He could have been grossed out or gotten out of the hammock, but he didn’t. He had smiled.

Richie bit his lip and scooted his hand across the. Eddie’s hand was in the middle of the seat tapping the leather unconsciously. Richie’s heart was beating wildly in his ears, contrasting from the sheer silence that filled the van. *Just do it, don’t be a pussy.* Richie pushed a little farther, just enough so that his fingernails grazed Eddie’s skin, just enough that it could be accidental. Eddie cleared his throat softly, keeping his face toward the window.

The shorter boy licked his lips. Richie's hand was near his; was he doing it on purpose? Eddie spread his hand slightly, pushing his pinky a bit further in the taller boy's direction. He felt Richie's finger tips brush across the edge of his hand, a ghostly sensation radiating from the spot. Eddie took a shallow breath and flipped his hand over so his palm was up. Slowly, so slowly in fact that in Eddie's drunken state he wasn't sure it was happening, Richie's fingertips slid up to match with Eddie's. It tickled slightly, and it wasn't a hand hold, but it was definitely intentional.

Richie fought his body's urge to tremble, and he briefly wondered if a seventeen year old could have a stroke. Eddie was letting him touch him. They were in the back seat, and even though it was tentative, and even though it was minimal, it was on purpose. Richie couldn't move. He was too scared to push any further, afraid of shattering the moment into unsalvageable pieces. But he couldn't retract his hand. No matter how small the contact, his body needed it, his mind fed off of it, his heart was stuttering from it.

Richie was so consumed in the moment that he didn't realize Stan had pulled in front of his house. The van had stopped for a few seconds without so much as a word from either boy in the back.

"Tozier, you forget your own house?" Stan asked. Richie and Eddie parted their fingers quickly as if they had been burned.

"Only because I'm so used to visiting your mom's," Richie quipped back. Stan rolled his eyes, but Bill chuckled to himself. Their leader was now curled up in the passenger's seat with his eyes closed. Eddie moved first, his legs buckling like a newborn deer. He stabilized himself against the seats as he shimmied through the opening in the middle row. The shorter boy stumbled over his own feet briefly, and Richie instinctively reached out, grabbing his hips to keep him steady. Eddie blushed deeply but continued out the van, Richie's hands on him the whole way.

"Alright guys, have a good night," Stanley called from the driver's window, peeling away from the driveway. Bill gave a half wave, his eyes still closed. Eddie gave a smile back and Richie playfully shot Stanley the bird.

Richie and Eddie walked up the sidewalk to the front door, both of them stumbling over each other.

“I think I drank too much,” Eddie said. “But it was funnn.” Richie snorted in response.

“Dude, you are such a lightweight.” As he said this Richie tripped over the top step and stumbled forward against the door. This earned a hysterical giggle from Eddie. “Oh shut it Kapsbrak, you’re way more gone than I am.”

“Bullshit man. Now open the door, it’s fucking cold.” Richie got out his key and unlocked it, giving a shushing finger to Eddie as they crept in. The possibility of getting caught and the lowered inhibitions unfortunately made everything utterly hilarious. Every misstep, every creak of the floorboards, had the two boys stifling their laughter as they tried to sneak up the stairs. They continued to shush each other obnoxiously as they ventured through the dark hallway to Richie’s door. Eddie opened it quickly, and the two boys heaved a sigh of relief once they had reached safety.

“Nailed it,” Richie declared, leaning against the wall.

“Sure,” Eddie dismissed with a chuckle. The two boys fell into silence; each worried that the other could hear his heartbeat. Eddie looked down at his feet and Richie nervously bit at a nail. Now what? “It’s late,” Eddie commented. Though his voice was barely audible it felt like an explosion in the silent vacuum that had developed.

“Yeah, we should go to bed I guess.” They both nodded at each other, but neither moved. Eddie shifted his weight, clearing his throat.

“Okay then.” He walked over to the other side of Richie’s bed and began to take off his shoes. Richie stayed on the wall, not realizing he was staring as Eddie removed his various layers of clothing. Eddie got down to his long sleeve shirt and jeans before looking at Richie, who quickly averted his gaze to something far less interesting on the floor. Eddie slipped out of his jeans and quickly hopped into the bed, covering up with the blanket. They normally

slept in just their boxers, but after tonight Eddie felt a little more exposed than usual.

Richie began to undress as well, and Eddie leaned his head back on the pillow. The room began to rotate slightly, and he had to close his eyes to keep from feeling nauseous. After about a minute the lights went dark from behind his eye lids, and he felt the bed shift from the weight of Richie crawling in. Eddie rolled on his side and opened his eyes, surprised to see that Richie was also facing him. They never slept like this; it was always their backs to one another. The moon shone through the windowpane, illuminating Richie's face and casting Eddie in darkness. He was glad, because he knew his face was beet red.

Richie's glasses were off, and Eddie could see him squinting to try and focus. Richie was wearing a white tank top revealing bony shoulders and a dusting of dark chest hair, but the rest of him was covered up with a blanket. Eddie loved Richie's glasses, but he liked the way his friend looked without them too. It was vulnerable and more stoic, he looked older. Maybe he liked it because the only time he saw it was at night, right before they both fell asleep.

Eddie's head was still spinning, and his skin felt tingly. The air between the boys was electric, each particle of air buzzing with tense energy. Eddie wanted to say something, but nothing really seemed right. Instead, Richie spoke.

"Whatcha thinking about Eds?" Eddie bit his lip, and decided on telling the truth. At least part of it.

"How I can't feel my face," he chuckled. This earned a bit of a chortle from the taller boy. "For real, look." Eddie flicked his cheek with his finger. "Absolutely nothing."

"What about this?" Richie asked, poking Eddie right in the dimple. Eddie shook his head, giving a breathy giggle. Richie continued poking different parts of his friends face, earning a bunch of laughs. After the fifth poke, Richie laid his palm on Eddie's cheek, his thumb gently tracing the boy's bottom lip. Eddie's breath hitched for a moment, but he shook his head 'no' again. Richie could feel the softness, and it intoxicated him with a new push of confidence. "How

about this?” He shifted his body forward and pressed his lips to Eddie’s. It was only for a second, a peck really, but Richie’s body shuddered with excitement as he broke away.

Eddie’s mouth was hanging open as he struggled to breath. He eventually took a gulp, every nerve ending in his body firing. “Maybe,” Eddie answered. “Better try again, just in case.”

Notes for the Chapter:

Thank you so much for reading. I wanted to delay the kiss to the next chapter, but I wanted it just as bad as you guys lol :p

Author's Note:

Thank you so much for reading. I encourage comments :)

This is my first Reddie fic and I'm very excited to write more (I've only been in the fandom for about three weeks).

Feel free to follow me at millennialmfa on tumblr